1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

is regarded as the ruler of this world; she is mentioned in many of the sacred formulæ, and of the occasional *kwarzam* uttered by the Todas on various occasions by far the most frequent are those of Teikirzi Tirshti.

Teikirzi is undoubtedly the most important Toda deity, and yet she is not so pre-eminent that she can be said to be in any way a supreme god. Though she is the ruler of this world, it is Ön who rules the world of the dead.

Influence of other Religious Systems

The Todas show undoubted signs of the influence of Hinduism on their religion. It would be quite easy for a visitor to the Todas to talk to some of the younger and more sophisticated men and to go away believing that the Todas differed little from the surrounding tribes in their religious beliefs. In my first conversation with the Todas on religious matters I was told that they worshipped the following six gods:—Nanjandisparan, whose temple is at Nanjankudi in Mysore; Petkon or Betakarasami, whose temple is at Gudalur; Punilibagewan, whose temple is called Punilikudi and is near Cheirambadi; Mari, a female deity, with a temple called Marikudi near Pokapparam; Magòli, another female deity, with a temple near Kodanad on the Nilgiris, and Karmudrangan,[1] whose temple is near Mettapollayam.

Four or five of these gods are probably Hindu deities, while Magòli may be a deity of the Kurumbas or Irulas. At the present time there is no doubt that their temples are visited by the Todas and offerings made to them. The most frequent motive for these offerings appears to be the desire for children. The Todas now pray to these gods, most commonly for this purpose to Nanjandisparan, Magòli or Karmudrangan, and if a child is born it is taken when one year old to the temple, its head is shaved, and an offering, usually in the form of an image of the child, given to the priest. Rice is also given, sufficient, it is said, to feed 101 men, and the proceedings are said to cost the Todas from 40 to 100 rupees.

[1] These were the names given to me by the Todas, and their spelling may not correspond with that in ordinary use.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

161 177 before the injurious influences made their effects felt to any great effect.

164 842 [273] The especial influences injurious to fertility have probably been syphilis and sexual immorality, for the Todas do not appear to have fallen to any very great extent under the influence of alcohol or opium. They certainly take both, and especially after the market day at the Ootacamund bazaar, I have seen Todas obviously under the influence of drink; but I believe this to have been only an influence of minor importance on the health of the people. Syphilis, on the other hand, has undoubtedly affected them to a considerable extent. At the present time its ravages are not very obvious, though, without looking for it especially, I saw several examples of its effects. There can be little doubt, however, that it has been a potent factor in the past. In a note in a book by A. C. Burnell,[1] it is mentioned that in 1871 thirty-one Todas were treated at Ootacamund for venereal disease, and of these thirty were syphilitic. This means that in one year over 4 per cent. of the total Toda population were treated for syphilis at one place, and we may be fairly confident that all those suffering from the disease did not apply for treatment.

831 842 Another factor working towards the diminution of the population has probably been sexual immorality. I shall have to return to this subject again later, and must be content here to point out that the Toda women have a very bad reputation, though perhaps their laxity is not as great as is usually supposed. Still, there can be little doubt that the women of some villages are extremely immoral, and it is probable that this has distinctly tended to produce sterility.

162 177 842 If the diminution in the size of the Toda family is due to these adverse influences, it should be found to be greatest in those sections of the Toda community which have been most subject to these influences. The best way of throwing light on this question is to compare the fertility of the different clans of the Tartharol. Some of these, such as Nòdrs, Pan, Taradr, and Kanòdrs, either live in outlying parts of the hills or are sufficiently remote from the chief centres of the European population not to have been influenced very greatly.

[1] *Specimens of South Indian Dialects*, Mangalore, 1873.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

The chief village of the Kars clan is situated close to Ootacamund and has suffered greatly from its neighbours, but many of the villages of the clan are more remote, so that the clan may be put down as one partly influenced. The people of Päm and Nidrsi, on the other hand, are more influenced than any other of the Toda clans, as is shown by the alterations in their villages and the neglect of the ritual of their religion. The villages of the Pämol are, or were, near to Wellington Barracks, and it is certainly the most degenerated of all the Toda clans. The following table, taken from Mr. Punnett's paper, shows the average size of the family in each case, and though the figures are somewhat irregular, they bear out the view that sterility is greater the more the people have come into contact with Europeans and their followers.

Name of clan.	No. of families.	No. of offspring.	Average size of family.	Average size of family for group.
Nòdrs	14	54	3·84	
Pan	8	21	2·37	3·89
Taradr	9	43	4·77	
Kanòdrs (uninfluenced)	11	33	3·00	
Kars (partly influenced)	25	76	3·04	3·04
Päm	10	22	2·20	
Nidrsi (much influenced)	10	30	3·00	2·60

Proportion of the Sexes

The records of the Toda population in the past all show an excess of men over women, and with the exception of the record of Ouchterlony, which is certainly untrustworthy, the excess is considerable. In view of their untrustworthiness no importance can be attached to the records taken earlier than that of 1866, and in the report for that year I have been unable to ascertain the proportions of the sexes. In 1871 there were 140·6 men for every 100 women; in 1881, 130·4 for every 100; in 1891, 135·9, and in the census of 1901, 127·4 men for every 100 women. My figures, derived from the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

595 It is possible that at one time the polyandry of the Todas
598 was not so strictly 'fraternal' as it is at present, and it is perhaps in favour of this possibility that in the instance of polyandry given by Harkness[1] the husbands were obviously not own brothers. It must be remembered, however, that this case came to the notice of Captain Harkness because the polyandry had led to disputes, and, as we shall see shortly, it is in those cases of polyandry in which the husbands are not own brothers that disputes arise.

The arrangement of family life in the case of a polyandrous marriage differs according as the husbands are, or are not, own brothers.

In the former case it seemed that there is never any difficulty, and that disputes never arise. The brothers live together, and my informants seemed to regard it as a ridiculous idea that there should ever be disputes or jealousies of the kind that might be expected in such a household.
595 When the wife becomes pregnant, the eldest brother performs
842 the ceremony of giving the bow and arrow, but the brothers are all equally regarded as the fathers of the child. If
851 one of the brothers leaves the rest and sets up an establishment of his own, it appeared, however, that he might lose his right to be regarded as the father of the children.

If a man is asked the name of his father, he usually gives the name of one man only, even when he is the offspring of a polyandrous marriage. I endeavoured to ascertain why the name of one father only should so often be given, and it seemed to me that there is no one reason for the preference. Often one of the fathers is more prominent and influential than the others, and it is natural in such cases that the son should speak of himself as the son of the more important member of the community. Again, if only one of the fathers of a man is alive, the man will always speak of the living person as his father; thus Siriar (20) always spoke of Ircheidi as his father, and even after Ircheidi is dead, it seems probable that he will so have fallen into the custom of speaking of the latter as his father that he will continue to do so, and it will only be when his attention is especially directed

[1] See his account at the end of this chapter.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

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842
851
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to the point that he will say that Madbeithi was also his father.

In most of the genealogies, the descent is traced from some one man, but there can be no doubt whatever that this man was usually only one of several brothers, and the probable reason why one name only is remembered is that this name was that of an important member of the community, or of the last surviving of the brother-husbands.

When the husbands are not own brothers, the arrangements become more complicated. When the husbands live together as if they were own brothers there is rarely any difficulty. If, on the other hand, the husbands live at different villages, the usual rule is that the wife shall live with each husband in turn, usually for a month at a time, but there is very considerable elasticity in the arrangement.

It is in respect of the 'fatherhood'[1] of the children in these cases of non-fraternal polyandry that we meet with the most interesting feature of Toda social regulations. When the wife of two or more husbands (not own brothers) becomes pregnant, it is arranged that one of the husbands shall perform the ceremony of giving the bow and arrow. The husband who carries out this ceremony is the father of the child for all social purposes; the child belongs to the clan of this husband if the clans of the husbands differ and to the family of this husband if the families only differ. When the wife again becomes pregnant, another husband may perform the *pursütpini* ceremony, and if so, this husband becomes the father of the child; but more commonly the *pursütpini* ceremony is not performed at all during the second pregnancy, and in this case the second child belongs to the first husband, *i.e.*, to the husband who has already given the bow and arrow. Usually it is arranged that the first two or three children shall belong to the first husband, and that at a succeeding pregnancy (third or fourth), another husband shall give the bow and arrow, and, in consequence, become the father not only of that child, but of all succeeding children till some one else gives the bow and arrow.

[1] I use the term 'fatherhood' instead of 'paternity' because the latter term seems to imply a meaning which does not belong to the Toda notion of 'father.'

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

595 842 851 The fatherhood of a child depends entirely on the *pursütpimi* ceremony, so much so that a dead man is regarded as the father of a child if no other man has performed the essential ceremony.[1]

In the only case in the genealogies in which the husbands of a woman were of different clans, it happened there were only two children, and that one father gave the bow and arrow for the first child and the other for the second.

If the husbands separate, each husband takes with him those children who are his by virtue of the *pursütpimi* ceremony.

595 847 182 There is no doubt whatever as to the close association of the polyandry of the Todas with female infanticide. As we have seen, the Todas now profess to have completely given up the practice of killing their female children, but it is highly probable that the practice is still in vogue to some extent. It has certainly, however, diminished in frequency, and the consequent increase in the proportion of women is leading to some modification in the associated polyandry.

178 182 595 It has been stated by most of those who have written about the Todas that the custom of polyandry is dying out, but a glance at the genealogies will show that the institution is in full working order even in the case of the infant marriages which are being contracted at the present time. There is, however, some reason to believe that it is now less frequent for all the brothers of a family to have one wife only in common. A study of the genealogies shows that often each brother has his own wife, or that several brothers have more than one wife between them. It seemed to me, however, almost certain that in these cases the brothers have the wives in common. In compiling the genealogies, one informant would give me the names of two or more brothers each with one wife, while another would give me the name of one brother with two or three wives, and would say that the other brothers had the same wives. When I pointed out the discrepancy and asked which was the true account, they usually said it made no difference and were almost contemptuous because I seemed to think that there was any disagreement

[1] For an instance, see p. 535.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

192 and bows down with his head to the ground at its threshold,
593 and then goes to the huts, where he is greeted with the
577 appropriate greeting, but this differs in no way from the procedure of a visitor to any *etudmad*.

114 Marshall in his book[1] on the Todas has suggested that the
234 existence of female succession among the buffaloes of the
611 Todas may be a relic of female descent among the people
842 themselves. He suggests that at one time the scheme of descent and kinship was the same for the Todas and for their buffaloes, and that with the introduction of polyandry there came in inheritance through males among themselves, while they continued to reckon the descent of the buffaloes in the female line.

We have seen (see p. 471) that the method of reckoning descent among the buffaloes is due superficially to the absence of names for male buffaloes and more deeply to the lack of interest in paternity. Nevertheless, Marshall's suggestion, wild as it may seem, should not be utterly scouted. The Todas regard their buffaloes so much as fellow creatures that any of their ideas concerning the relations of their buffaloes to one another should not be without interest to the student of social regulations.

234 If one may speak of social organisation among buffaloes—
611 and in the case of the Toda herds we are justified in doing
842 so—we have a state of society in some ways analogous to that which many sociologists suppose to have existed at one time
181 in the early stages of human society. We have various groups of buffaloes, and each buffalo—certainly each female buffalo—belongs to the same group as its mother. There is complete promiscuity, and the buffalo belongs to its mother's group because paternity is unknown or disregarded.

It is true that this condition is artificial, but it is this very artificiality which gives it its interest, for it shows that people like the Todas, whose whole lives are devoted to the buffalo, to whom the breeding of the buffalo should have the deepest interest, have allowed this state of things to come about. If they had attached importance to paternity nothing would have been easier than to regulate breeding, to record paternity,

[1] P. 132.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

and even to have developed a system of male descent among their buffaloes such as exists among themselves.

The nature of what may be called the social regulations of the buffaloes shows that the Todas take little interest in the part played by the male in the process of mating, and, as we have seen, this lack of interest is almost as great among themselves. Side by side with the strictest regulation of marriage as a social institution, such great laxity prevails in regard to sexual relations that the Todas may almost be said to live in a condition of promiscuity, though, as I have endeavoured to show, the degree of promiscuity is in practice perhaps hardly as great as their statements would lead one to expect.

ADOPTION

It is clear that the custom of adoption of children is not practised by the Todas. They denied its existence emphatically, and I met with no instance which led me to suspect its presence in compiling the genealogies.

If a child is left an orphan, it is looked after by the people of its clan, but it is always clearly recognised that the child retains the father's property, and belongs to the *madol* and *pòlm* of the father.

There is, so far as I could ascertain, no religious custom which makes it necessary that a man should have children. The duties of a child at the funeral ceremonies can quite well be performed by some other member of the clan.

There is a social reason which makes it inconvenient in some cases that a man should die without male issue. If a man is the only representative of his *kudr*, and has no children, the *kudr* will become extinct, and the clan will be put to the trouble of rearranging the families of which it is constituted. If such a man is childless he may take another wife in the hope of having a son to carry on the *kudr*, but the adoption of a child for the purpose is never thought of. A good case is that of the two brothers Mudrigeidi and Odrkurs in Table I. They are the last two representatives of one *kudr* of the Nòdrsol. They have had two wives, one of whom has had a daughter and a boy who died, and in the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

842 hope of having a son, one of the brothers had recently
618 married a young girl, Obalidz, as his third wife, the others being still alive, though one had been taken by another man.

GOVERNMENT

623 The most important feature of Toda government is the *naim*, or *noim*,[1] a council having a definite constitution. The
627 *naim* proper has to do with the affairs of the Todas in general, and, in addition, more informal councils,[2] consisting of the chief members of a clan, may be held to settle matters arising within the clan. It seems, however, that the supreme *naim* may sometimes be called upon to settle the internal affairs of a clan.

623 The *naim* of the general body of Todas should have five
177 members, or, if more than five members, they should be drawn from five sources. Four of these sources are the Tarthar clans of Kars, Nòdrs, and Taradr, and the Teivali clan of Kuudr. The fifth source is the Badaga village of Tuneri, from which a Badaga man may be sent to take part in the *naim*. He is only called upon to sit, however, on special occasions; and in the many councils which I saw during my visit a Badaga was rarely present. He probably only sits, as a rule, when questions arise which involve the relations between the Todas and Badagas.

623 The Toda representatives should be drawn from certain families of their respective clans. The Kuudr representative should belong to the family known as the *manikudupel*, and the representatives of Kars, Nòdrs, and Taradr to the families known as *tinkanikudupel*. A few years ago the Toda representatives were Kuriolv of Kuudr (52), Parkurs (8) and Piutolvan (10) of Kars, Kudòdrsvan (3) of Nòdrs, and Ircheidi (20) of Taradr, though there was some question whether Ircheidi was on the *naim*, or whether his place had not been taken by Piutolvan, the second Kars representative. All these men are at present living, but, with the exception of

[1] A meeting of the council is often spoken of as *kûtkûdriti*, "the assembly assembles," or *kûtpuniti*, "the assembly makes."

[2] It seemed clear that the term *naim* is also applied to these clan councils.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

618 the hills. The clan is distinguished by its possession of the
234 conical *poh* at Kanòdrs, and by the fact that many of the adventures of Kwoto or Meilitars took place in the region it inhabits. Although Kwoto was a Meigars man, he is regarded as having a close connexion with the Kanòdrs people, and various features of the ritual of the Kanòdrs *ôoh* are said to be derived from him.

618 The clan is at present a small one, with a distinct majority
842 of females. In fact, it seems so usual for members of this clan to have no children or only female children that there is some likelihood that the Kanòdrsol may become extinct. The present numbers are about thirteen males and twenty-three females.

618 There was some doubt as to the number of *kudr*. I was told that there are three, headed by Arsolv (27), Kineri (29), and Pòlkab (30) respectively, but at an *irnörtiti* ceremony both Arsolv and Kineri would give to Pòlkab, while the latter would give to both, so that it seems probable that there are properly only two *kudr*, as in other clans. One of these has only one *pòlm*, that of Pòlkab. The other has three *pòlm*, headed by Arsolv, Neratkutan (28), and Kineri.

621 The following are the chief villages of the Kanòdrsol:—

Kanòdrs (Devarmand). This village now consists of the *poh* only. There are still two *mani* at this village, one of which is called *Pünkòghlag*, a name closely resembling the name of the churning-stick at the *ti*. There are at present no dwelling-huts at the place, nor any remains of such huts, though it would appear from the legend of Kwoten that the village was inhabited at one time.

Pishkwosht (Bikkapatimand). This is a large village where most of the Kanòdrsol now live. The only dairy is in ruins. Close to the village there are a number of flat stones almost level with the ground (Fig. 71) which are called *Teudr*, "the god way," and are said to mark the spot where the gods (*teu*) used to meet. Just above these is a large buffalo pen, which is reputed not to have been made by man. Whenever the gods went this way they used to deposit pieces of dried buffalo-dung on this spot and these became the stones of the *tu*.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XX.

In my desire to witness a Toda's deathbed, as well as all the ceremonies consequent thereon, I had promised a handsome present to anyone who would bring me timely information, whether by night or by day, of an approaching event; when I noticed a lad move off quietly with bright hope on his countenance, and shortly afterwards I overtook him striding over hill and dale, straight as a bird to his quarry. The reply to my enquiry where he was going was translated by the Tamil interpreter, 'Going to see somebody *too much* sick.' He was in fact on his road to some invalid Toda, whose case he thought bad.

When a man is so ill as to lead to the expectation of his early demise, he is dressed up in the ornaments and jewellery of his house, in order that he may make a respectable corpse. These he will wear until he either dies or recovers. Indeed a man who had revived from what was thought his death-bed has been observed parading about very proud and distinguished looking; wearing the finery with which he had been bedecked for his own funeral, and which he would be permitted to carry till he really departed this life.

When on the point of death, the last office his kin perform for their relative, is to give him milk, if only a drop or two, to drink. No prayer is said, nor are the Gods invoked in any way.

It is well here to observe, as reflecting on other social prejudices, that there is no religious necessity for *a son* to perform any one of the ceremonies attending on a Toda's death and funeral. The laws of Manou style the eldest son 'him who is begotten to perform the duty,' and in consequence of this absolute necessity for a son, we find amongst the Aryas a high importance set upon male progeny. The Todas, however, whilst equally craving for sons, yet do not require them for any such religious object. The pride in male children appears to be based upon less definable causes, so much so as to seem almost inherent in man.

The decorated corpse is now wrapped in a new mantle, into

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

attending the census, and the personal care bestowed on it, to obtain genuine results, I have every reason to think that the record of those *alive*, is as nearly correct as possible: but I have not the same confidence as regards those who had died. I attribute much of this inaccuracy to the imperfect memory of the people, in describing events long past—a person once dead, being rarely talked about—but very largely also to their habit of ignoring the gentler sex.

That such a habit should really exist, was suggested to my mind, on observing how much girls were left out of count when they described the numbers in families, and of how great importance the birth of a son was esteemed. If a Toda is asked how many children—kinmokh—he has, his reply will almost invariably be, so many sons—mokh:[9] and if further information is desired as to his daughters, one has to specify tûjmokh. On one occasion a father replied to the usual enquiry, 'I have five sons.' 'Where are they?' 'There—1, 2, 3, 4, 5.' I could only see four. Two or three times the numbers were gone over, each time the man gravely counting five, I finding only four. So, pointing to each in succession, I enumerated 1—2—3—4. Where is the fifth? 'There,' he said, pointing to his *wife*, who quietly nodded approval. It seems that the good woman had not yet given birth to the child which both parents had agreed to consider a *son*!

Viewing human action, ever as the resultant of many forces —passions, necessities, emotions, habits—pulling in divers directions, with various degrees of strength; we find that the Todas very early in the world's history, practically solved the difficult physical problem of finding the condition of equilibrium of those especial forces which affected them; how, in fact, to *stand still* in a world, the law of whose nature is that of perpetual change—a remarkable example of the

[9] Mr. Metz asserts positively that the word mokh is used by the Todas for *son*, and not for *child*. In other Drâvidian dialects it may have expanded in its application so as to mean children, both male and female.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

Perhaps the feeling which engrosses the Toda mind more

CHAP. XXIV.

than any other, and may be termed his ruling passion, is that of *necessity for* children.

842 589

The first instance which came to light of the serious—everything with the Toda is taken *au sérieux*—nature of this topic, was when the women of a certain village had collected round us, in obedience to summons; one was noticed sitting conspicuously apart, giving the impression that she was in some way tabued. 'What is the matter with her? Is she sick?' 'No.' 'Mourning?' 'No, not that.' 'She is a barudi'[1] they said quietly, and in the pitying tone in which one would apply the word 'crazy.' A handsome woman of forty, with the eyes and nose of a hawk. She had committed no fault; had added several boys and girls to the population. She was not ill, nor deformed, or sulky. She was merely a barudi, a widow. Now, it is a reproach to be a widow, unless quite old: or to be childless; the word barudi, in the Toda language, bearing the triple meaning of old woman, widow, and barren woman. This person, we have seen, was neither old nor sterile, yet as a widow who should be, but was not, producing children, she was put to shame.

[196]

To be a baruda, or widower, is equally a term of reproach for men.

Another illustration. We met with two brothers—men past sixty years of age, whose joint wife had died. In order to avoid the disgrace of being styled baruda, as well, doubtless, as to obtain the services of some one who could cook their meals, they had forthwith married again. But being elderly gentlemen, joint fathers of nine children, including twins, and not caring for further additions to their family, they had selected to be their joint wife, a woman of fifty, who, having been *discarded as sterile*, was then living a single and neglected life.

I have ascertained positively, that so great is the disgrace

[1] The derivation of this word has already been given in Chapter VII. Note 15.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

attached to the epithets baruda and barudi, as applied to young married people, the husband would connive at any steps his wife might take to obtain children. The way in which my informant described what would be done in these circumstances, leaves no doubt in my mind of the truth of what I have written. CHAP. XXIV.

The Bible affords many instances of the display amongst primitive tribes of this craving for progeny, and of the reproach attaching to sterility. In Genesis xvi., 2—5, we find Sarai prefers that her husband Abram should have children by her maid, rather than there should be none in the house. We meet with a similar occurrence, narrated too with a clearness that leaves no doubt as to the intention, in Genesis xxx., 1—4, in the case of Rachel, the wife of Jacob. Again in 1 Samuel i. The book of Genesis, xxxviii., 26, gives another instance, and another motive.

Of this desire for progeny I have seen many examples amongst the Todas, so strongly marked, but to all appearances apart from the sense of personal ambition, and separate from any demands of religion[18] or requirements for support in old age, as to give the impression that it was the primitive faculty of Philoprogenitiveness, acting so insensibly, naturally, as to have the character more of a plain instinct, than of an intelligent human feeling.

There is something very affecting in the spectacle which these people present; so like animals in their primitive notions; closing in round upon one another, huddling together, and breeding with such a zeal as if they feared to lose their hold on the world. Yet, even, murdering many, that many might survive the dreaded danger.

[18] This peculiarity has already been noticed in Chapter XX.

TODA MARRIAGE REGULATIONS AND TABOOS

By M. B. EMENEAU

IT IS many years now that the Todas of the Nilgiris in southern India have been known as a people of peculiar customs and it is thirty years since these peculiar customs were described with a wealth of detail by Rivers in his monumental volume.[1] Even now, however, much remains to be gleaned, and this paper attempts to supplement and correct Rivers' account of one important department of the life of the Todas, viz. the regulations concerning marriage and the taboos associated with these regulations.

A comprehensive account of the general framework of Toda organization is necessary, though it will be in part repetition of what is already well-known. The tribe has, first, two main divisions: tɔɪrðəs and tɔ̈ðvɪɲ.[2] For marriage purposes these divisions are endogamous. Each is subdivided into a number of divisions called mod (the familiar mund is the Badaga form of the word). This word is used also to denote any of the small villages of a few huts in which the Todas live, any of the dairies which stand isolated from a village, including the most sacred of these dairies, the tɪrmod, any of the funeral places, which usually are free of buildings, in fact any spot which at any time is the scene of Toda activities. But modɪɲ, "man (or, people) of the mod" is used only of the members of a mod in its widest sense, that of a subdivision of the people, and in this paper mod will be used only in this sense. The tɔɪrðəs are reckoned to have ten mod, the tɔ̈ðvɪɲ five. These divisions are exogamous. Membership in a mod is determined by legal paternity; a man belongs to the mod of his "father," as does a woman until her marriage. The "father" is the man who has last given the bow to the mother of the child in the ceremony called pɯrsɯt, "act of giving bow."[3] Physical paternity does not count at all for legal purposes, as Rivers has clearly stated. The legal father then is the legal husband of the child's mother, and the husband must be of a different mod from that to which his wife belonged by birth.

Further, a man cannot marry a woman if the two are poɟjoɟ. Membership in a group of people known as poɟjoɟ is determined by descent in the female line. The female members of the poɟjoɟ to whom a man belongs are in his own generation his sisters, the daughters of his mother's sisters, the

[1] W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906).

[2] For an explanation of the phonetic symbols employed see the final paragraph of the paper.

[3] See Rivers, pp. 319-21.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

which can often last for nearly an hour. The relatives now depart and return to the village, leaving the man and woman to cook themselves a meal. They return later, however, and all spend the night together in the *shola*, before going back to the *mand* in the morning, when a feast, open to visitors as well, is held.

Performance of the *pursütpimi* ceremony determines once and for all the fatherhood of all children borne by a woman. It need not be repeated as long as it is desired that the same man should continue to be the father of other children brought into the world by the woman. Thus, dead men can well be considered the parent of later offspring, and will continue to be looked upon as such, unless a new *pursütpimi* ceremony with another man be performed.

In most cases it is the husband who is called upon to give the bow and arrow; in the case of a plurality of husbands, one of them, not necessarily the eldest, will do so, and it is not customary to repeat it with another one of the husbands when once done by one of them. That is why men who have failed for one reason or another to procreate children, will preferably carry off the pregnant wives of others, so that when they go through with the ceremony, they will, all the same, become fathers. This was the case with the famous Toda Kuriolv (22) who, having become impotent from a wound received from a buffalo which he caught in his youth at a Toda funeral, was, nevertheless, able to have legal heirs even if they were not his own physiological sons. In cases of pregnancy having been brought about by intermoiety concubinage, a man of the same division as the woman is obliged to give the bow and arrow when she reaches her seventh month, should no one have done this for her before. The child would otherwise be illegitimate, something unheard of with the Todas.

In accordance with this system of legally determining paternity, the legitimacy of the children is assured, as no case is known in which a man could not be found to perform the *pursütpimi* ceremony for a pregnant woman. Even in instances of premarital impregnation, the girl having been "married" at an early stage to her *maichuni*, even if the latter is not available for some reason to give her the bow and arrow, some other suitable male partner will always be found for her.

When a woman is carried away from her husband or husbands to become the wife of another man or group of men, and is subsequently compensated for by a fixed amount of buffaloes, the proceedings are not considered by the Todas to be those of a divorce. With them, that is something quite different, with a decidedly disparaging connotation

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648 837 [114] families among the Mudugas. This has been clearly brought out by Professor C. von Fürer-Haimendorf in a short note published on his findings in Malabar (see *Man*, Vol. LIV, Feb. 1954, art. 24).

According to what he writes, those village headman at Pottikal who have a traditional friendship with certain Todas receive the latter at least once a year in their homes for several days. Each of them vacates his house completely, leaving, however, his wife to look after the Todas (usually brothers) who then assume the role of "husbands" towards her. In return, when the Mudugu headman pays back the visit at the *mud* of his same Toda friends, he has access to their wife and sleeps with her as long as he is staying in the Nilgiris. Neither of the parties [842] apparently believes that conception can result from such passing intercourse, which perhaps accounts for the tolerance shown by the Todas towards their women's sexual relations with a stranger. I feel sure, however, that it would be impossible to discover anything about this practice from the Nilgiri tribe itself, and it is certainly due to the fact that Professor von Fürer-Haimendorf was working among the Mudugas and not among the Todas that he was able to hear of its existence at all.

838 I enquired repeatedly about homosexuality during my two visits to the Todas, and kept my eyes open for any evidence of it. My questions on this subject seemed to provoke merriment, and the men would usually laugh when interrogated about it. As far as I could make out, there does not seem to be much proclivity towards it, either among men or women. While with the latter I could record no case at all, even from hearsay, with the other sex at least there seemed to be some reason to believe that Tilipa (12) of the Karsh *mudol* was inclined that way. A pleasant old man, with long curls and an effeminate manner, [684] he was reputed to have been caught a number of times with men [625] younger than himself, to the intense amusement of the tribe, and to have been fined by the *noim* for this misdemeanour. He was married to a masterful, virilioid woman, who bossed him about in no uncertain manner, and from whom he had "had" four fine sons. It was whispered, however, that he was only the legal father, having given the bow and arrow for them, while another was their physiological sire.

158 828 Neurosis was a question very difficult to go into, working as I was through an interpreter, and having no means by which to delve very deeply into the individual psyche. Here too, appearances seem to show that there was little of it about, the complex social organisation of the tribe affording plenty of outlets for the feelings, emotions and drives of ill-adapted persons. Panger, son of Pillar (52), however, was a case

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595 little say in the matter. Whether this is generally true of other Toda
833 households, I cannot say, not having studied them in such intimate detail as the Melgarol (people from Melgarsh). It was Erzigwuf who would decide which of the three brothers, Mutnarsh, Kuddhue, or Munbokwutn, she would have with her for the night. She usually slept with
[792] the eldest, Mutnarsh, and while I was in the Nilgiris would have nothing
845 to do with Kuddhue because he being a cripple, she feared that he was
[787] the cause of her having twice given birth to twins (an evil omen with the Todas). I rarely saw the youngest, Munbokwutn, join her; so much even, that I enquired once if he ever slept with her. To which I got the reply that if he did not, he would not stay. Erzigwuf's predilection for Mutnarsh was due to her preferring him, I felt, because he had the strongest personality. He was also the eldest which, even if it did not prejudice the common wife in his favour, did undoubtedly contribute to give him the assurance and poise which attracted her.

833 I enquired which was the usual position in which these people had coitus, and heard that it was that in which the woman lies on her back with the man on top of her, between her open legs. Only the inhabitants
[186] of Malabar "do it the other way round", I was told, not without a certain amount of amused sarcasm. I also heard that copulation never
[357] took place, and should never do so, on the *erriikh*, the raised earthen
[515] platform which serves as a bed and seat inside a Toda *ersh*. But as I received contradictory information on this point (others assuring me that it was, on the contrary, just there that couples made love), the latter should be accepted with reservation.

●842 No kind of birth control is practised at all, as is generally the case
[171] all over India. This is, to a large extent, due to ignorance, and where this is not so, to religious convictions, the former of these two reasons being probably dominant with the Todas. It is so in spite of a very
831 active and varied sexual life of both sexes within the tribe, something which strikes even an untrained observer at once. Toda women, I was told by Kauvarsathi, "think of nothing else (than sexual intercourse), escaping whenever they can into the *sholas* to copulate with men of their choice". Emeneau has recorded in *Language and Social Form: A Study of Toda Kinship Terms and Dual Descent*, p. 173 (see Bibliography), that the Todas are "vigorously and adventurously sexual". He also says, further on: "Ordinary marriages within the society and the freedom allowed in changing mates, and the *to:tjoff* (*teevrshat*) institution providing for sexual unions overstepping the boundary between the moieties give evidence of a high degree of sexual activity." He goes on

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(6) Nalsirwurf: The young wife of Karnor, whom he took in 1945, thus putting an end to the polyandrous arrangement with Pads. She is twenty-five years old – thirty-five years younger than her husband. She is a beautiful woman, probably the handsomest of the whole tribe, and knowes it. She assumes languorous, indolent airs, which give her a certain amount of added attraction, as it suits her dusky, classical features, and figure, but I was unable to make out if this behaviour was due to a deliberately studied poise or if it was the result of her life with Karnor which, as was to be expected, is not a happy one; the old man is far too domineering and matter of fact with her, while obviously very proud that he has taken her to wife. 159 621

(7) Mutnarsh: An ugly, hard-working, intelligent and willful man, the real head of the whole family for which he selflessly works very hard. He is devoted to his wife and children and would do anything to assist them. When I first met Mutnarsh (after the birth of the two last twins) he struck me as being unreliable and unpleasant; but after I had got used to him, I came to appreciate his outstanding qualities as a husband and father, and developed considerable respect for him. He too is a gardener in the Botanical Gardens. [464]

(8) Kerrerr: A cripple, aged twenty-five, ten years younger than Mutnarsh. He cannot walk upright, the broken joints of his knees keeping him from extending these, and obliging him to walk with them constantly bent. The story which his family tells is that, as a child, he was sitting on the wall of the buffalo pen, when Kali (the Indian goddess of destruction) in the form of wind threw him down and broke both his legs. He is extremely ugly, with a wild look in his eyes, but on the other hand, he is exceptionally good-natured and happy, and is very attached to the children who do not, however, return his affection. He is nearly always employed as a priest, if not in the *tarvali* of the Melgarsh *mud*, in the tribe's *wurvalis* for which he is very much sought after. [732] [793]

(9) Mudgowuth: The youngest brother of the trio, aged nineteen. When I was in the Nilgiris ten years earlier, he was only nine, but already a polyandrous husband of the brothers' common wife, Ezrigwuf. He is still only an overgrown boy, very athletic and strong, a great favourite of the children with whom he behaves more as a big brother than as a father. He takes an active part in the tending of the buffaloes, and is never far from the *mud* where he apparently likes to stay. [595]

(10) Ezrigwuf: The embodiment of motherhood, aged thirty, she is one of the few fertile women of the tribe (there were one hundred Toda women who were sterile at the time of my stay in 1949). As she is so [842]

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159 621 central a figure in this family, her story should be, I think, a bit elaborated. She was born a member of the Pan clan of the Tardharsh moiety, the daughter of a woman called Monkiz of the Kiaror *modol* and officially of Tinmarsh, and a man of Pan. I say "officially" because actually Monkiz already had a husband, Urshen of Melgarsh, by whom she was [587] expecting. But, as is very usual with the Todas, she was carried off by Tinmarsh when he heard that she was with child and, after due compensation had been paid to Urshen, he gave her the bow and arrow in the *patsütpini* ceremony. Monkiz died soon after, and the newborn [844] Erzigwuf was more or less abandoned, her father going off with another woman who did not care for her at all. She would have died had it not been for Terzivel, her paternal grandmother, who took her to the *mad* Natersh and looked after her. At a very early age, as is the Toda custom, she was married to her *matchuni* (cross-cousin), Kishkil of Kiaror. [587] When she came of age, she was married to Alvurvishk of Karsh, who paid six buffaloes to Kishkil in compensation for taking her away. She had no children by this husband, who actually died soon after the wedding. He was succeeded by Mutnarsh of Melgarsh and his brothers, her present husbands. She at first had four still-born children, for which 159 621 the family roundly abused her; she was very depressed by this and wanted to commit suicide, but could never actually bring herself to do it. 845 Then she went to Palani in the plains (a Tamil temple famous for its [762] pilgrimages) and made a vow to the deity. Soon after, she was again expecting, and this time she gave birth to her first son, Pershrörsh. Then [842] she had the other two children, and again went to Palani as, after Pengalam, six years passed without her having any more children. Mutnarsh went with her, and they both prayed in the temple, she for a boy and he for a girl, each without knowing about the other. The result was Sodup [777] and Sodam, a pair of twins which the Todas consider very unlucky (in olden days one of them was immediately put to death). In this case, however, the *tasol* (Toda seer) when consulted told them that it was all right, because obviously their wish had been fulfilled after she and Mutnarsh had, in ignorance of each other, prayed for a child of different sex. They later returned again to Palini, and the twins which were born when I was at Melgarsh came, it was called, as a result of this last pilgrimage. How they were received will be narrated below. Erzigwuf had a lover, Kalorst of Pier, for some time (two years), as is the cus- 159 tom with Todas, but eventually Mutnarsh quarrelled with him and he 621 left. She seems very happy in her present family life, and is always sur- [837] rounded by her children who cling to her like chicks to a hen.

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as they had given up of their own accord when the taste of Erzigwuf's milk changed, due to her advanced pregnancy. 862

Somewhat incredulous of Erzigwuf's assertions as they were made to me, I questioned the local medical practitioner of Ootacamund, Colonel D'Souza, Indian Medical Service (rtd.) about their veracity. He assured me that it was quite possible. He said, even, that it did not tire the mother, as after some time "it becomes mechanical". Colonel D'Souza also assured me that the contention often heard that prolonged suckling prevents conception was a fallacy completely disproved by facts, "at least in Asia". Erzigwuf also told me that Sodup and Sodam were born after she had not had any menses for eight years; two days after, however, she contradicted herself and said this was not correct (she said she had made "a mistake"). But another time she assured me that Toda women cease having any sort of periods for four months after they have given birth; that is why, she said, they cannot have children earlier – she herself had been like this. Although I do not much believe in this assertion, which is contrary to every ordinary observation anywhere, I give it here for what it is worth. 853 841 842

Small children suck their thumbs very early, Erzigwuf asserted. As a proof, she showed me one of the new-born twins, fast asleep in her lap with its thumb in its mouth. For napkins, she used bits of cloth which she regularly changed and washed. She said that she taught her children to be clean after six months. Before that, she would take them out at regular intervals and hold them in her hands, both boy and girl. Then, after, she would teach them gradually to go out by themselves, punishing them by beating them on the buttocks with a stinging nettle (called *tworkh* in Toda) when they misbehaved in the house, and rewarding them with sweets when they were good and did as they were told. They learned very quickly, in approximately one month. 854 863 [861] [824]

Regarding genital development, Erzigwuf was very outspoken, and I had no difficulty in getting information from her, even in the presence of Narjilkh and Pengelam, who would listen with interest to the conversation through Kanvarsathi-Sunderdoss, my interpreter. She said that masturbation started very early – at about nine months. They play with their genitals, both boys and girls, but the former more so, all the time; when walking, suckling and lying down, as she put it. When they get older, this play is intensified, and after they have reached the age of one year, she intervenes to stop it. She did so, she said, and not Mutnarsh who "lets the children do anything they want". Asked why she did not allow them to carry on freely, she said, because if she did not forbid 864